



**ROBERT L. EHRlich, JR.**  
GOVERNOR

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**Maryland Air National Guard to Honor Deployed  
Citizen-Airmen and Their Families**

**BALTIMORE** – Governor Robert L. Ehrlich, Jr., today officially welcomed home members of the Maryland Air National Guard's 175th Wing, based at Warfield Air National Guard Base in Middle River, Md., who have been deployed in support of worldwide operations since June 2003.

"For the past two plus years, the men and women of the Maryland Air National Guard have continued to answer the call, serving in places like Afghanistan, Iraq and here at home, and they have done so with great honor," said Gov. Ehrlich. "Marylanders everywhere can be proud of their service. They are true professionals in every sense of the word, having played a vital role in the war on terror at home and abroad. Kendel and I thank these great Americans for their service and wish them and their families all the best now and in the future."

In total, more than 4,600 Maryland Army and Air National Guardsmen have been deployed at home and abroad since Sept. 11, 2001

"These citizen soldiers from the Maryland Air National Guard answered the call to serve to their country in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other locations around the country and the world. These everyday heroes risked their lives for their nation and their exemplary sacrifice and service should be commended. We need qualified men and women like these to win the War on Terror and keep our country safe," said Congressman C.A. Dutch Ruppersberger (D-Md.).

Most recently, aircrew members and support personnel with the Maryland Air National Guard's 135<sup>th</sup> Airlift Group deployed with their C-130J "Hercules" transports into the Central Command area of operations in support of Operations ENDURING

FREEDOM and IRAQI FREEDOM. In addition to the C-130J deployment, members of the Maryland Air National Guard's 235<sup>th</sup> Civil Engineer Flight were deployed for one year in Iraq where unit members were involved in reconstruction efforts.

"The operational deployments of the 135th Airlift Group are but the most recent chapters in the continuing story written by the Maryland National Guard in the Global War on Terror," said Craig W. Duehring, principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for reserve affairs. "We also recognize that none of these actions could take place without the active support of the families and employers of our Guardsmen. Today we honor all of them for their sacrifice on behalf of our country."

Maryland Air National Guardsmen also have supported worldwide contingencies here at home. In addition to their deployment in Iraq, members of the 135<sup>th</sup> Aerial Port Flight was mobilized for one year at Dover Air Force Base, De., during which time they moved nearly 76,000 tons of cargo, more than 30,000 passengers and handled more than 5,000 aircraft.

"The Maryland National Guard continues to earn its well-earned reputation as a world-class organization," said Maj. Gen. Bruce F. Tuxill, the Adjutant General of Maryland. "Their professionalism and technical abilities continue to draw praise from their active duty counterparts. They are some of Maryland's finest and their performance has been and continues to be in line with the highest tradition of the Maryland National Guard."

The Maryland Air National Guard is comprised of a State Headquarters in Baltimore, the 175th Wing at Martin State airport and its two flying units and support staff - the 104th Fighter Squadron (A-10) and the 135th Airlift Group (C-130J). More than 1,600 full-time and traditional members are employed by the Maryland Air National Guard, contributing more than \$100 million annually to Maryland's economy.

The Air National Guard represents more than one-third of the total United States Air Force's total structure. Under the Total Force Policy, the Air National Guard, the Air Force Reserve and the active United States Air Force are full partners in protecting the United States and its interests at home and abroad.